the forty committee

BY L. FLETCHER PROUTY

"By God, Prouty, those bastards are going to let them murder Trujillo. They go around telling everyone this shit about anticommunism; invading Cuba with a half-assed task force and then when they have one tough son-of-a-bitch right there in the heart of the Caribbean, what do they do? They take away his support. He'll be dead in less than forty-eight hours."

General Darcy was spitting mad. He was one of the toughest guys who ever strapped himself into a P-51 fighter. He was a real professional. He believed in fighting the Cold War as hard as he had fought the total war against Hitler. Now, in May 1961, less than one month after the Bay of Pigs, he had just come back from a meeting of the Forty Committee (then called the Special Group 5412/2). They were playing God again and Rafael Trujillo, the dictatorial president of the Dominican Republic, was the next target for termination.

"Prouty, before you go back to your shop, go down to personnel. Find out what it takes to retire. This is not my game. I'm getting out." Before Darcy's papers could be processed, Trujillo was dead, murdered in the city that carried his name, by men of his own army.

Tom Darcy had made it clear many times that he had no love for Trujillo nor for what he stood; but despite that he knew Trujillo would never condone communism, and anyway, "it is not our business to mess around in their internal affairs."

Assassinations are not *made* by the Forty Committee; they are *permitted*. When the South Vietnamese military found out that the U.S. was withdrawing its support from the Diem brothers in Saigon, there was but one thing for the Diems to do. Take that preferred plane ride and leave—quickly. Trujillo was too proud to heed the warning, and he was shot down in the streets. The Diems were too stubborn. They returned to their palace to find that their CIA-trained elite guard—their only real personal protection—had vanished. They were defenseless, dead.

Many of the telegrams that tell this story are contained in the "Pentagon Papers." Anyone can see how this country removed its support from the Diems' government and all but engineered their murders. An interesting sidelight to this came up in the Watergate testimony: Charles Colson ordered E. Howard Hunt to doctor up the State Department cables pertaining to the Diem murders in order to make it appear that President John Kennedy had ordered that act. Look at this from another perspective. Colson, Hunt, and others knew that Kennedy had not ordered those murders. They wanted it to look as though he did. If Kennedy did not order that action, someone of lesser authority did. Was it the Forty Committee? If not the committee, was it the CIA acting alone? Without belaboring this crucial point here, this is what it is all about. Who has this tremendous power? Who uses this great power—with or without presidential consent, let alone without the consent of congress? The record is full of these actions. Eisenhower, Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Nixon were all caught in this web.

When President Salvador Allende's opposition in Chile learned that the United States had withdrawn all support of his government, they knew it was time to move. The Forty Committee did not have to say, "We have decided to kill Allende." All it had to do was to let the right people know that they would not support him and that they would not censure these people. Allende should have recognized the pattern; not long before he had witnessed the same thing in Bolivia.

President Victor Paz Estensoro lost favor with Washington. The CIA tipped off General Rene Barrientos Ortuno that the gates of the city were open. In an almost effortless coup d'etat, Barrientos and his CIA friends flew into La Paz and the country was theirs. Estensoro accepted transport out of Bolivia and flew to exile in Lima, Peru. The committee does not kill anyone, they just welcome in the new regime and fling out the old—dead or alive.

What is this Forty Committee, which has this power over the noncommunist world? Who are its members? Do they operate within any law? Whom do they

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". . . Henry Kissinger did not relinquish the CIA-oriented job of National Security Advisor when he became Secretary of State. This is no doubt an unauthorized and perhaps illegal use of this position. By his very duties this advisor performs functions that are in direct conflict with those of Secretary of State. . ."